

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02

SP-02 SS-15 ICA-20 /106 W

-----012219 040331Z /64

R 031714Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1609

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

UNCLAS PRETORIA 3748

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PDEV, RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: NO REGISTRATION FOR ELECTION: WHITE

REFERENDUM STILL TO BE HELD

1. PRESS ACCOUNTS OVER THE LAST FEW DAYS QUOTE "SOURCES"
AS SAYING THAT THE GOVERNMENT MAY NOW BE THINKING OF
FOREGOING REGISTRATION OF THE APPROXIMATELY 3.5 MILLION
BLACK VOTERS SO THAT IF CAN HOLD AN ELECTION PRIOR TO THE
BEGINNING OF THE RAINY SEASON IN NOVEMBER. THE METHOD USED
IN LIEU OF REGISTRATION WOULD BE TO REQUIRE AN ACCEPTABLE FORM OF
PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION AT THE POLLS. THE REASONS GIVEN FOR DROP-
PING REGISTRATION ARE THE LIMITED TIME LEFT AND THE FACT THAT
REGISTRATION TEAMS WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY OPERATING IN THE OUTLYING
RURAL AREAS BECAUSE OF THE WAR. IN HIS ACCOUNT, ANTHONY RIDER OF THE
RAND DAILY MAIL SAYS THE IDENTIFICATION METHOD WILL

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LEAD TO FIERCE POLITICAL CONTROVERSY IN CASES
WHERE IDENTIFICATION IS SUSPECT BECAUSE IT WILL FAVOR THE
HEADMEN AND CHIEFS WHO WILL BE CALLED UPON TO MAKE THE
DECISIONS ON THE VALIDITY OF IDENTIFICATION OFFERED. RIDER
ARGUES, THIS WOULD GIVE THE ADVANTAGE TO CHIRAU'S ZUPO WHICH THE
HEAD MEN AND CHIEFS SUPPORT IN MOST CASES.

2. PRESS ACCOUNTS ALSO STATE THAT DURING THE JUNE 28 SESSION OF PARLIAMENT, IAN SMITH, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS PUT BY BLACK MP'S SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD GO AHEAD WITH A WHITE REFERENDUM ON THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. SMITH REPORTEDLY SAID HE WOULD DO SO BECAUSE THE WHITES WERE THE ONES GIVING CONCESSIONS AND THEREFORE, NEEDED TO BE CONSULTED. THE BLACKS WERE GAINING FROM THE SETTLEMENT AND, AS IT WAS KNOWN THAT MAJORITY RULE WAS WHAT BLACKS WANTED, THERE WAS NO REASON TO HAVE A BLACK REFERENDUM. WHEN ASKED IF THE COUNTRY WOULD BE BACK TO "SQUARE ONE" IF THE WHITES VOTED NO, SMITH SAID, "YES, SIR." NO INDICATION WAS GIVEN AS TO THE TIMING OF THE REFERENDUM.
EDMONDSON

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NNN

Message Attributes

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TAGS: PINT, PDEV, RH
To: STATE USUN NEW YORK
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